

NORWAY 2022 HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Norway is a parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy. The government consists of a prime minister, a cabinet, and a 169-seat parliament (Storting), which is elected every four years and may not be dissolved. The monarch generally appoints the leader of the majority party or majority coalition as prime minister with the approval of parliament. Observers considered the multiparty parliamentary elections in September 2021 to be free and fair.

The national police have primary responsibility for internal security. Police may call on the armed forces for assistance in crises. In such circumstances the armed forces operate under police authority. The National Police Directorate, an entity of the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, oversees the police force. Civilian authorities maintained effective control over the security forces. Members of the security forces did not commit any abuses.

Significant human rights issues included credible reports of: crimes involving violence targeting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or intersex persons; and the existence of the worst forms of child labor.

The government had mechanisms in place to identify and punish officials who may commit human rights abuses or engage in corruption.

Section 1. Respect for the Integrity of the Person

a. Arbitrary Deprivation of Life and Other Unlawful or Politically Motivated Killings

There were no reports that the government or its agents committed arbitrary or unlawful killings.

b. Disappearance

There were no reports of disappearances by or on behalf of government authorities.

c. Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

The constitution and law prohibit such practices, and there were no reports that government officials employed them.

Prison and Detention Center Conditions

There were no significant reports regarding prison or detention center conditions that raised human rights concerns.

Administration: Authorities conducted proper investigations of credible allegations of mistreatment.

Independent Monitoring: The government permitted visits, including unannounced visits, by independent human rights observers.

d. Arbitrary Arrest or Detention

The constitution and law prohibit arbitrary arrest and detention and provide for the right of any person to challenge the lawfulness of his or her arrest or detention in court. The government generally observed these requirements.

Arrest Procedures and Treatment of Detainees

The law requires warrants authorized by a prosecutor for arrests. Police may make an arrest without a warrant if any delay would entail risk of injury to police or civilians or damage to property. If police arrest a person without a warrant, a prosecutor must consider as soon as possible whether to uphold the arrest. Detainees must be informed of the charges against them immediately after an arrest, and, if the prosecutor wishes to detain suspects, he or she must arraign them no later than three days after arrest. There were no reports that these rights were not respected. The arraigning judge determines whether the accused should be held in custody or released pending trial. There is a bail system, but it was rarely utilized. Officials routinely released defendants, including nonresident foreigners, accused of minor crimes pending trial. Defendants accused of serious or violent crimes usually remained in custody until trial.

By law authorities should provide detainees access to a lawyer of their choice before interrogation or, if the requested lawyer is unavailable, to an attorney appointed by the government. The government pays the attorney fees in all cases. Criminal detainees benefited from legal aid if the period of police custody was expected to last more than 24 hours (for adults) or 12 hours (for juveniles). Consequently, it was not uncommon for criminal suspects to be subjected to police questioning without a lawyer present.

The law mandates that detainees be transferred from temporary police holding cells to a regular prison cell within 48 hours. There were no reports that these rights were not respected.

The law provides that a court must determine whether and for how long a detainee may be held in solitary confinement during pretrial detention.

e. Denial of Fair Public Trial

The constitution and law provide for an independent judiciary, and the government generally respected judicial independence and impartiality.

Trial Procedures

The constitution and the law provide for the right to a fair and public trial, and an independent judiciary generally enforced this right.

Political Prisoners and Detainees

There were no reports of political prisoners or detainees.

Civil Judicial Procedures and Remedies

Individuals or organizations may seek civil remedies for human rights violations through domestic courts. They may appeal cases alleging violations of the European Convention on Human Rights by the government to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) after exhausting all avenues of appeal in domestic courts.

f. Arbitrary or Unlawful Interference with Privacy, Family, Home,

or Correspondence

The constitution and law prohibit such actions, and there were no reports that the government failed to respect these prohibitions.

Section 2. Respect for Civil Liberties

a. Freedom of Expression, Including for Members of the Press and Other Media

The constitution and law provide for freedom of expression, including for members of the press and other media, and the government generally respected this right. An independent press, an effective judiciary, and a functioning democratic political system combined to promote freedom of expression, including for members of the media.

Freedom of Expression: The law prohibits “threatening or insulting anyone, or inciting hatred or repression of or contempt for anyone because of his or her: (a) skin color or national or ethnic origin; (b) religion or life stance; (c) sexual orientation or lifestyle; or (d) disability.” A separate law criminalizes hate speech, including private remarks, based on a person’s sexual orientation or their gender, gender identity, or expression. Violators are subject to a fine or imprisonment for not more than three years.

Censorship or Content Restrictions for Members of the Press and Other Media, Including Online Media: The prohibitions against hate speech applied also to the print and broadcast media, the publication of books, and online newspapers and journals.

Internet Freedom

The government did not restrict or disrupt access to the internet or censor online content, and there were no credible reports that the government monitored private online communications without appropriate legal authority.

b. Freedoms of Peaceful Assembly and Association

The constitution and law provide for the freedoms of peaceful assembly and association, and the government generally respected these rights.

c. Freedom of Religion

See the Department of State's *International Religious Freedom Report* at <https://www.state.gov/religiousfreedomreport/>.

d. Freedom of Movement and the Right to Leave the Country

The law provides for freedom of internal movement, foreign travel, emigration, and repatriation, and the government generally respected these related rights.

e. Protection of Refugees

The government cooperated with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other humanitarian organizations in providing protection and assistance to refugees, returning refugees, or asylum seekers, as well as other persons of concern.

Access to Asylum: The law provides for the granting of asylum or refugee status, and the government has established a system for providing protection to refugees.

The nongovernmental organization (NGO) Norwegian Organization for Asylum Seekers (NOAS) continued to criticize the country's Internal Flight Alternative, which considers whether a potential asylum seeker first attempted to flee to another part of their country of origin before claiming asylum in Norway.

NOAS remained critical of the perceived lack of openness and transparency in the Immigration Appeals Board, an entity under the Ministry of Justice and Public Security. It noted the board's strict criteria to hear cases and that only 9 percent of asylum seekers were granted a hearing with the appeals board in 2021. For family reunification applicants, the number was 1 percent, according to NOAS. The applicant cannot appeal a final decision by the appeals board, but the appeals board may make a final decision based on an issue that was not originally in question, which removes the applicant's opportunity to respond to the board's grounds for

rejecting the case. NOAS reported that 87 percent of asylum applications were granted protection in the initial review.

Amnesty International Norway raised concerns over a lack of consistency across the government's asylum determinations. Amnesty reported a Colombian political activist arrived in the country in November 2021 and immediately applied for asylum with her boyfriend and mother. The Directorate of Immigration (UDI) rejected all three applications in April. Together with their lawyer, Amnesty appealed the decision and their right to protection under the law. UDI decided to give protection to the activist and her boyfriend on September 18. The mother's case was still pending.

The Directorate of Immigration and the Immigration Appeals Board ceased its use of digital platforms such as Skype to carry out interviews and hearings in March when the country lifted its COVID-19 restrictions.

There is no mechanism to evaluate the impact of travel sanctions against visa applicants to the country from members of vulnerable groups. Amnesty International Norway reported that the visa applications of all Russian participants to Barents Pride in Kirkenes were initially rejected prior to Amnesty's advocacy.

In August 2021 the government evacuated an estimated 860 vulnerable Afghans, including 28 unaccompanied minors, from Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul. The government stated publicly that the children were eligible for family reunification.

Refoulement: The government's temporary suspension of deporting failed asylum seekers to Afghanistan due to the deteriorating security situation expired in March. The deportation of asylum seekers to Afghanistan has not resumed. The country does not have a process to comprehensively evaluate the suitability of secondary locations for asylum seekers prior to deportation. As of September 19, no asylum seekers returned to Afghanistan, according to the Ministry of Justice.

Access to Basic Services: Amnesty International Norway criticized the lack of access to health care and other fundamental human rights for the approximately 50 paperless and irregular migrants present in the country. These individuals may access the public health system only when they require acute medical attention.

Individuals include, for example, those who were not able to return to their home countries because their governments refused to accept them, issue travel documents, or both.

Durable Solutions: The government offered resettlement for refugees in cooperation with UNHCR. The government's Directorate of Immigration had several programs to settle refugees permanently in the country. Through the International Organization for Migration, the government assisted the return of unsuccessful asylum seekers to their countries of origin through voluntary programs that offered financial and logistical support for repatriation. Identity documents issued by either the Norwegian or the returnee's government were required to use this program. The government continued routinely to offer migrants cash support in addition to airfare to encourage persons with rejected asylum claims to leave the country voluntarily.

Individuals granted refugee status may apply for citizenship when they meet the legal requirements, which include a minimum length of residence of seven of the previous 10 years, completion of an integration course on Norwegian society, and successfully passing a language test.

Temporary Protection: As of August, the government provided temporary humanitarian protection to nine individuals who may not qualify as refugees. The government also established a temporary collective humanitarian protection scheme for Ukrainians as a result of Russia's war in Ukraine. As of November 8, the government granted temporary protection to 29,544 Ukrainians. Permits for temporary protection may be renewed and can become permanent. Amnesty International Norway applauded the government's expedited processing and integration of Ukrainian refugees and suggested it could serve as a model for welcoming refugees from warzones in the future.

f. Status and Treatment of Internally Displaced Persons

Not applicable.

g. Stateless Persons

According to the Ministry of Labor and Social Inclusion, an estimated 1,600

stateless persons lived in the country as of September; they were not counted as refugees.

As of August, the Directorate of Immigration received 57 asylum applications from stateless persons. The birth register does not register the father of stateless persons born in the country on birth certificates. According to Norwegian citizenship law, a person will automatically become a Norwegian citizen by birth if one of the parents is a citizen. Children born to stateless persons are as such not Norwegian but also considered stateless persons. If the parents have been granted permanent residency in the country, the stateless child can be granted citizenship within a year after birth.

Section 3. Freedom to Participate in the Political Process

The constitution and law provide citizens the ability to choose their government in free and fair periodic elections held by secret ballot and based on universal and equal suffrage.

Elections and Political Participation

Recent Elections: Observers considered the parliamentary elections held in September 2021 to be free and fair.

Participation of Women and Members of Minority Groups: No laws limit the participation of women or members of minority groups in the political process, and they did participate.

Section 4. Corruption and Lack of Transparency in Government

The law provides criminal penalties for corruption by officials, and the government generally implemented the law effectively. There were no reports of government corruption during the year.

Section 5. Governmental Posture Towards International and Nongovernmental Investigation of Alleged Abuses of Human

Rights

A variety of domestic and international human rights groups generally operated without government restriction, investigating and publishing their findings on human rights cases. Civil society and NGOs generally work very closely with the government, share similar agendas, receive government grants, and in some cases manage government funds. Government officials and NGOs are mindful of their well-established relationships and take steps to ensure independence and avoid the appearance of government oversight.

Government Human Rights Bodies: The country has ombuds for public administration (the parliamentary ombuds), children, equality, and discrimination (the equality and antidiscrimination ombuds, or LDO), and health-care patients. Parliament appoints the parliamentary ombuds, while the government appoints the others. All ombuds enjoyed the government's cooperation and operated without government interference. The parliamentary ombuds and the Antidiscrimination Tribunal hear complaints against actions by government officials.

Although the ombuds' recommendations are not legally binding, authorities usually complied with them.

Parliament's Standing Committee on Scrutiny and Constitutional Affairs reviews the reports of the parliamentary ombud, while the Standing Committee on Justice and Public Security is responsible for matters relating to the judicial system, police, and the penal, civil, and criminal codes.

The National Human Rights Institution (NIM) is an independent body funded by the parliament. It submits an annual report to parliament on human rights in the country. By advising the government, disseminating public information, promoting education and research on human rights, and facilitating cooperation with relevant public bodies, NIM makes recommendations to help ensure that the country's international human rights obligations are fulfilled. NIM also engaged in several topics of structural and institutional discrimination and encouraged the government to become increasingly involved in issues such as the treatment of children from minority groups by the child-welfare services and allegations of racial profiling by police.

The Freedom of Expression Commission, an independent organization appointed by the government to review the social, technological, legal, and economic frameworks for freedom of expression in society, presented its report to the government on August 15. The Commission found that the overall situation for freedom of expression was good in the country but also noted that many abstain from engaging in debates, especially online, due to harassment or fear of harassment, from other debaters. It also highlighted the importance of researching the effects and influence of social media platforms, as well as the importance of increasing viewers' ability to identify false information online. During the government's annual forum on anti-Muslim hostility, Muslim leaders told the prime minister many Muslims in the country do not participate in public debate for fear of retaliation.

Section 6. Discrimination and Societal Abuses

Women

Rape and Domestic Violence: The law criminalizes rape of a person, regardless of gender, including spousal rape, and the government generally enforced the law. The penalty for rape is up to 21 years in prison, depending on the severity of the assault, the age of the victim, and the circumstances in which the crime occurred. Guidelines for rape cases without any aggravating circumstances call for sentences of up to approximately four years. Rape cases resulted in an average sentence of three years and four months' imprisonment.

The law provides penalties of up to six years in prison for domestic violence and up to 21 years for aggravated rape. Gender-based violence, including intimate partner violence, was a problem. In 2021, 25 percent of murder victims were killed by a partner or ex-partner, according to the Ministry of Justice. All were women. The government generally enforced the law, although Amnesty International Norway criticized police for not allocating sufficient resources to investigations and asserted that the indictment and conviction rates for rapes were too low.

The government had programs to prevent rape and domestic violence, and offices within the police districts offered counseling and support to survivors. All police

districts had a domestic violence coordinator. Public and private organizations operated 43 government-funded shelters and managed five 24-hour crisis hotlines. Government funding for shelters is managed through local municipalities. The Crisis Center Secretariat operates 22 of the 43 shelters and noted that local municipalities routinely faced budget shortfalls and were unable to provide shelters with the resources needed. Victims of domestic violence have a right to consult a lawyer free of charge before deciding whether to make a formal complaint. If the government initiates criminal proceedings, the victim is entitled to free assistance from a victim's advocate. Victims may also qualify for a one-time payment from a government-sponsored fund

Sexual Harassment: The law criminalizes sexual harassment of a person, regardless of gender. The law provides that “employees shall not be subjected to harassment or other unseemly behavior,” and the government effectively enforced these provisions. The law applies to employers with as few as 20 employees and requires most companies to include in their annual reports information on their work environment and gender equality. Employers who violate the law are subject to fines or prison sentences of up to two years, depending on the seriousness of the offense. The Antidiscrimination Tribunal has the authority to impose penalties in sexual harassment cases more in line with other cases of discrimination and harassment and puts an onus on public authorities to work actively for gender equality and the prevention of harassment, sexual harassment, and gender-based violence. The costs and resources needed to bring such cases to court have been barriers to victims seeking redress in all but the most egregious cases.

Reproductive Rights: There were no reports of coerced abortion or involuntary sterilization on the part of government authorities.

The government provides access to sexual and reproductive health services for sexual violence survivors, including emergency contraception.

Discrimination: The law provides for the same legal status and rights for women as for men, including under family, religious, personal status, and nationality laws as well as laws related to labor, property, inheritance, employment, access to credit, and owning or managing businesses or property. The government enforced the law effectively. Under the law public and private authorities must advance

gender equality in all areas of society. The law mandates that 40 percent of the members of boards of directors of publicly listed companies be women; this applies to employers with as few as 20 employees. Companies largely complied with the law.

Although women have the same legal status as men, they experienced discrimination in terms of gaining employment as well as discrimination in the workplace itself (see section 7.d.). As of September, the Antidiscrimination Tribunal received 51 complaints of gender discrimination as well as 17 complaints related to parental leave.

Systemic Racial or Ethnic Violence and Discrimination

Racial profiling and violence and discrimination against members of racial or ethnic minority groups are against the law, but the government did not always enforce these laws effectively. Authorities did not keep records relating to the stop and search of members of vulnerable groups. NGOs such as the Center against Racism continued to report complaints of police profiling of members of ethnic and racial minority groups, particularly young men. As of September, the Antidiscrimination Tribunal received 102 reports of ethnic discrimination.

Discrimination against immigrants, including asylum seekers and irregular migrants, and ethnic minorities remained a problem. Ethnic discrimination occurred in employment and housing.

NGOs and research institutes, including the Center against Racism and Norwegian Center for Studies of the Holocaust and Religious Minorities in Norway (the Holocaust Center) reported a rise in hate speech on the internet against ethnic minorities during the year. In addition to the Sami, five ethnically non-Norwegian groups with a long-standing attachment to the country have a special protected status under the law: Kvens/Norwegian Finns, Jews, Forest Finns, Roma, and the Romani/Tater community (a distinct group of travelers who emigrated to Norway and Sweden in the 1500s).

The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), an independent human rights monitoring body of the Council of Europe, noted in 2021 that, according to civil society, Romani children were among the victims of

bullying.

During its 2020 visit to the country, ECRI's delegation received complaints from parents with a migration background, and from Roma and Romani/Tater representatives, about Child Welfare Services (CWS). The ECRI report stated that approximately 40 children belonging to the Romani and Tater minorities were in foster care with very limited access to the Romani culture. The law provides for nationwide implementation of a mediation process involving direct communication between the CWS and parents that reduced court cases by two-thirds in the five pilot counties.

Indigenous Peoples

There is no official registry of Sami in the country. During the year, government statistics showed that 53,710 persons lived in the areas defined as "Sami" in the northern part of the country. In addition to participating freely in the national political process, the Sami elect their own parliament, the *Samediggi*, which exercises certain administrative and financial powers according to the law. In 2021 a total of 20,545 persons registered for the Sami parliamentary elections. Members of the Sami parliament also represent their constituents in international fora and organizations such as the Arctic Council and the United Nations. Elections for the Sami parliament follow the national election schedule.

The constitution provides a right for the Sami to safeguard and develop their language, culture, and community. NGOs and Sami officials continued to express concern over Sami children's lack of access to Sami language education due to a dearth of qualified teachers.

A 2021 study by the country's Arctic University in Tromsø showed that Sami women experienced domestic and partner violence at a greater rate (17.6 percent) than non-Sami women in the country (11.8 percent). The MOJ and the Sami parliament jointly held a conference in August on identifying root causes of violence and abuse in Sami communities. The Sami Council identified strong family loyalties in Sami communities and a lack of domestic violence responders with Sami language skills as significant barriers to victims reporting abuse.

The Sami have a right to consultation on the use of unpopulated lands traditionally

used for reindeer husbandry under the 2005 Consultations Agreement. Under the law, three of the six members of the council to determine the proper usage of the land must be ethnic Sami. Sami parliament officials acknowledged consultation as critical for Sami input on government and commercial projects on traditional lands but said the agreement only requires the government to consult and does not include a mechanism to ensure agreement. As the government moved to develop greater wind-power capabilities, the Sami raised concerns about the use of their land. Reindeer avoid the wind turbines, which leads to limited grazing areas and increased density in remaining areas. The government stated it takes the reindeer industry and the Sami parliament into account when considering proposals for new wind-power projects. In October the Supreme Court ruled that the government violated the rights of the Sami community by permitting the construction of wind farms on Sami land. The government has not ordered the wind farms be removed or taken any apparent measures to address the court ruling. The Sami Council held hearings during the year on new projects on Sami territory. The Sami Council has delegates from nine member organizations in Finland, Norway, Sweden, and Russia. Following the beginning of Russia's war in Ukraine, the Sami Council and the Sami parliament in Norway ceased communications and effectively suspended cooperation with Sami organizations in Russia.

Children

Birth Registration: Citizenship is derived from one's parents; children born in the country do not automatically become citizens. All birth clinics in the country reported births to a central birth register and provided the parents with a birth certificate. The birth register does not register on birth certificates the father of nonresidents born in the country. The birth certificate does not confer citizenship.

Child Abuse: The law criminalizes child abuse, and the government generally enforced the law. In 2021 the Department of Children, Youth, and Family Affairs initiated 41,933 investigations of alleged child abuse and completed 43,514 investigations. By the end of 2021, the CWS assisted 21,116 children, of whom 19,257 received in-home assistance, while 1,859 were removed from their family home.

Between January and September, the ECHR completed review of two child

protection cases and found against the government in one case for separating children from their parents. The ECHR had 19 pending cases against the CWS.

Child, Early, and Forced Marriage: The minimum legal age for marriage in the country is 18 for both women and men.

Sexual Exploitation of Children: Commercial sexual exploitation, sale, grooming, or using children younger than 18 for commercial exploitation, including child sex trafficking, is illegal, both in the country and abroad when committed by a citizen of the country. In both cases the punishment is either a fine or a prison sentence of up to two years. Child pornography is also illegal and punishable by a fine or a prison sentence of up to three years. The government generally enforced the law. In 2021 the police reported 1,350 sexual offenses involving children. Sexual offenses include sexual activity, committing sexual acts with, or aggravated sexual assault against a child. The minimum age for consensual sex is 16.

Antisemitism

At least 1,500 Jews lived in the country, 741 of whom belonged to Jewish congregations, according to Statistics Norway. The government does not keep statistics that require citizens to report their religion.

Jewish community leaders reported the public and government generally supported the community, although they acknowledged incidents of antisemitism. According to NGOs and research institutes, including NIM and Jewish community leaders, hate speech on the internet against ethnic minorities and religious groups increased. Online far-left nationalist site *Steigan.no* published antisemitic content including an article critical of Ukraine that played on antisemitic tropes that focused on the Jewish identities of George Soros and Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

The government extended its 2016-2021 *Action Plan against Anti-Semitism* for the period 2021-2023. It continued to fund initiatives to combat antisemitism through the national budget through the action plan. The action plan provided programmatic support and coordination towards integrating antisemitism education into all schools, supporting Jewish museums and cultural institutions, funding research on antisemitism and Jewish life, and public advocacy programs to combat

antisemitism. The government provided NOK 12.5 million (\$1.2 million) to the Dembra Program to train teachers to increase awareness and prevent and combat antisemitism, prejudice, discrimination, and harassment of minorities in schools. The Dembra Program was coordinated by the Holocaust Center.

Trafficking in Persons

See the Department of State's *Trafficking in Persons Report* at <https://www.state.gov/trafficking-in-persons-report/>.

Acts of Violence, Criminalization, and Other Abuses Based on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity or Expression, or Sex Characteristics

Criminalization: No laws criminalize consensual same-sex sexual conduct between adults. In April, on the 50-year anniversary of the repeal of section 213 of the Penal Code, which had criminalized sexual relations between men, the government issued an official apology for public officials' treatment and detention of gay individuals.

Violence against LGBTQI+ Persons: On June 25, a perpetrator carried out a shooting attack at the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex (LGBTQI+) bar, the London Pub, in Oslo during festivities in the lead up to the Oslo Pride parade, killing two and injuring 21. LGBTQI+ activists and NGOs, including the Norwegian Organization for Sexual and Gender Diversity (FRI) and Amnesty International Norway, highlighted the trauma and chilling impact the attack had on the LGBTQI+ community.

Discrimination: The law prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in housing, employment, citizenship law, and access to government services such as health care and recognizes LGBTQI+ individuals, couples, and their families. The government enforced these laws. While violence motivated by discriminatory attitudes towards transgender persons is not considered a hate crime, crimes based on discriminatory attitudes towards sexual orientation can be treated as aggravating circumstances.

According to NGOs and research institutes, including the Institute for Social

Research, and FRI, hate speech on the internet against LGBTQI+ persons continued to be a problem. Youths who were harassed with anti-LGBTQI+ bullying had higher rates of depression. In 2021, 57 LGBTQI+ hate crimes were reported to the police.

Availability of Legal Gender Recognition: The Gender Recognition Act of 2016 permits citizens over the age of 16 to change their legal gender by submitting an electronic form to the National Population Register. Children under the age of 16 require consent of all legal guardians to change their legal gender.

Involuntary or Coercive Medical or Psychological Practices Specifically Targeting LGBTQI+ Individuals: So-called conversion therapy is not banned in the country. There were no reports that conversion therapy was practiced.

Restrictions of Freedom of Expression, Association, or Peaceful Assembly: Following the attack on the LGBTQI+ London Pub during Oslo Pride, the Oslo Police and the Police Security Services advised all pride celebrations in the country be cancelled for a period and informed organizers the police could not guarantee their safety. NGOs and LGBTQI+ activists criticized what they considered poor communication by police with pride organizers and the LGBTQI+ community and noted it enhanced community trauma. Amnesty International Norway reported in one instance the police announced cancellation of a pride celebration to members of the press before contacting the organizers.

Persons with Disabilities

Persons with disabilities can access education, health services, public buildings, and transportation on an equal basis with others. The constitution and law prohibit discrimination against persons with disabilities and the government provided information and communications in accessible formats. The government effectively enforced and implemented these provisions. The law mandates access to public buildings, information, and communications for persons with disabilities. All children up to the age of 15 have the right to attend the school closest to their home. The government provides a right to education supports upon the completion of a needs assessment. Two out of three children with disabilities who need additional educational supports receive additional instruction outside their

classroom.

According to the Antidiscrimination Tribunal, as of September, it received 157 complaints of discrimination based on disability. The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombuds raised concerns about police preparedness and handling of interviews with persons with disabilities. In one investigation into sexual assault against a person with developmental disability, police delayed interviews with the victim by nearly four weeks due to communication difficulties associated with the individual's disability. In reviewing the case, the Discrimination Tribunal found discrimination occurred arising from delays in interviewing the individual, and that indirect discrimination occurred as the questioning was not sufficiently adapted to the individual's disability and was unnecessarily intrusive.

Other Societal Violence or Discrimination

In 2021 the number of hate crimes increased by 9.5 percent to 815 from 744 in 2020, according to the Norwegian Police's official statistics report *Strasak*. Media and the Norwegian Center against Racism reported continued anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant sentiment in society. Stop the Islamization of Norway (SIAN) held multiple protests that were faced by larger groups of counterdemonstrators. The Center against Racism organized counterprotests at SIAN rallies to demonstrate opposition to their anti-Muslim rhetoric.

Section 7. Worker Rights

a. Freedom of Association and the Right to Collective Bargaining

The law provides for the right of workers, including migrant workers (those who have a work permit in the country), to form and join independent unions, bargain collectively, and conduct legal strikes. The law prohibits antiunion discrimination and requires reinstatement of workers fired for union activity.

The right to strike excludes members of the military and senior civil servants. With the approval of parliament, the government may compel arbitration in any industrial sector if it determines that a strike threatens public safety.

The government effectively enforced applicable laws. The penalties were

commensurate with those for other laws involving denials of civil rights, such as discrimination. Penalties were regularly applied against violators.

b. Prohibition of Forced or Compulsory Labor

The law prohibits and criminalizes all forms of forced or compulsory labor, and the government effectively enforced laws against it. Penalties were commensurate with those for other analogous crimes, such as kidnapping. A maximum sentence of up to six years' imprisonment for offenses involving adult victims and up to 10 years' imprisonment for offenses involving child victims were commensurate with analogous crimes. Exploitation of foreign national women without legal residency into domestic servitude in private homes occurred throughout the year, according to the NGO ROSA (Re-establishment, Organizing Safe Places to Stay, Security, Assistance), which provides assistance to potential victims of human trafficking.

Forced child labor occurred (see section 7.c.).

Also see the Department of State's *Trafficking in Persons Report* at <https://www.state.gov/trafficking-in-persons-report/>.

c. Prohibition of Child Labor and Minimum Age for Employment

The law prohibits all of the worst forms of child labor. Children between the ages of 13 and 15 may be employed up to 12 hours per week in light work that does not adversely affect their health, development, or schooling. Examples of light work include assistant work in offices or stores. Children younger than 15 need parental permission to work, and those older than 15 can work as part of vocational training, if they are supervised. Between ages 15 and 18, children not in school may work up to 40 hours per week and a maximum eight hours per day. The law limits work by children who remain in school to only those hours "not affecting schooling" without specific limits, but less than 40 hours per week. Child welfare laws explicitly protect children from exploitive labor practices. The government effectively enforced these laws, and both civil and criminal penalties were commensurate with those for other analogous serious crimes, such as kidnapping. Penalties were regularly applied against violators.

While employers generally observed minimum age rules, there were reports that

children were subjected to forced labor. Children were subjected to forced begging and criminal activity, particularly drug smuggling and theft. Commercial sexual exploitation of children also occurred. There were also reports of children forced to work as unpaid domestic help.

d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation

The law prohibits discrimination in respect of employment and occupation, based on race, religion, national origin, color, sex (including pregnancy), ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation, and gender identity. HIV or AIDS status, and refugee or stateless status are not covered by the law. The government effectively enforced the law and invoked penalties when violations were discovered. Penalties were commensurate with laws related to civil rights, such as election interference. Penalties were regularly applied against violators.

Discrimination in employment and occupation occurred with respect to gender and ethnicity. The law provides that women and men engaged in the same activity shall receive equal wages for work of equal value. In 2021 women earned on average 12 percent less than men monthly, according to Statistics Norway, which also reported that part-time work increased to 46 percent of women and 25 percent of men in 2021. As of September, the Antidiscrimination Tribunal had received 51 complaints of gender discrimination as well as 17 complaints related to parental leave (see section 6, Women). There was no prohibition against gender-based discrimination in access to credit. Equally qualified immigrants sometimes had more difficulty finding employment than nonimmigrants. As of August, the unemployment rate among immigrants was 4 percent, compared with 1.6 percent among nonimmigrants, according to the Norwegian Labor and Welfare Administration. African immigrants had the highest unemployment rate at 7.1 percent, followed by Asians at 4.7 percent, immigrants from eastern EU countries at 3.2 percent, and South and Central Americans at 3 percent.

e. Acceptable Conditions of Work

Wage and Hour Laws: The law does not mandate an official minimum wage. Instead, minimum wages were set in collective bargaining agreements. Statistics Norway used 60 percent of the median household income after tax for the relative

poverty limit. In 2021, an estimated 10 percent of the population had an income below the poverty limit, according to NGO the United Nations Association of Norway.

Occupational Safety and Health: The law provides for safe and physically acceptable working conditions for all employed persons. The Norwegian Labor Inspection Authority (NLIA) is responsible for occupational safety and health (OSH) laws and, in consultation with nongovernment experts, sets occupational safety and health standards. These standards are appropriate for the main industries in the country. Workers may remove themselves from situations that endanger health or safety without jeopardy to their employment; authorities effectively protected employees in this situation.

The NLIA may close an enterprise immediately if the life or health of employees is in imminent danger and may report enterprises to police for serious breaches of the law.

The Norwegian Working Environment Act requires employers to prevent work-related accidents and maintain a safe and healthy working environment for all employees. The law requires employers with 50 or more workers to establish environment committees composed of management, workers, and health-care personnel. Employers with 10 or more workers must have safety delegates elected by their employees. These delegates are tasked with actively identifying and addressing potentially unsafe conditions and responding to workers' OSH concerns and complaints. The NLIA carries out inspections to ensure employers uphold their responsibilities.

The country's Transparency Act compels companies to respect human rights and decent working conditions in connection with the production of goods and services, and to ensure the public has access to information on how companies handle negative consequences on human rights and decent working conditions. Companies covered by the new law must perform due diligence assessments to obtain an overview of the consequences their businesses, supply chains, and business partners have on fundamental human rights and labor conditions. Amnesty International Norway noted the Transparency Act's positive impact on working conditions in Norwegian businesses and the ensuing impact on those

companies' global business partners and contractors.

Wage, Hour, and OSH Enforcement: The law provides for premium pay of 40 percent of salary for overtime and prohibits compulsory overtime in excess of 10 hours per week. In 2021 police received 421 reports of violations of the labor law and other related laws.

The NLIA is responsible for enforcing wage, hour, and OSH laws and effectively enforced laws and standards in the formal sector. Penalties were commensurate with those for similar crimes, such as fraud or negligence. Penalties were regularly applied against violators. The law provides the same benefits for citizens and foreign workers with residency permits but forbids the employment of foreign workers who do not have residency permits.

The number of labor inspectors was sufficient to enforce compliance. Inspectors could conduct unannounced inspections and initiate sanctions.